

Trading Posts

WHO WE ARE
WHAT WE DO

Maintain/Improve Game Populations to Meet Hunting, Fishing, & Trapping Demands

Research, Inventory, & Monitor

- Determine Population Status
- Estimate Carrying Capacity
- Understand Inter-Species Relationships

Maintain/Improve Game Populations to Meet Hunting, Fishing, & Trapping Demands

Predation Management

- Survey & Inventory
- Evaluate Predator & Prey Balance
- Implement Control Measures

Ensure the Long-term Survival of Native Fish, Wildlife, & Plants

Native Species Management

- Restore to Historic Areas
- Manage "At Risk" Species and 229 Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- Inventory Native Fish, Wildlife, & Plant Species

Increase Public Knowledge of Idaho's Fish & Wildlife

Outreach & Volunteer

- Multimedia Outreach
- Website
- Volunteer Programs
- Master Naturalist

Reduce Disease Impacts on Fish & Wildlife Populations, Livestock, & Humans

Wildlife Diseases

- Monitor, Diagnose, & Respond to Fish & Wildlife Diseases (CWD, EHD, Whirling Disease)
- Domestic & Wildlife Disease Transfer

Increase the Capacity of Habitat to Support Fish & Wildlife

Protect & Enhance Habitat

- Assist & Advise Private & Public Land Managers
- Inform Land Management Decisions

Trading Posts

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Participants in the Wildlife Summit were encouraged to visit the “Trading Posts” distributed throughout the venues. These informational booths allowed face-to-face conversations with Fish and Game staff members.

The Trading Posts were on display during the course of the three-day Summit and consisted of display posters with information about the duties and work activities performed by Idaho Fish and Game and programs that support the objectives in Fish and Game’s strategic plan, The Compass.

Comment forms at each of the Trading Posts solicited feedback from participants. Each of the seven regions had five booths. A total of 89 comment forms were received statewide.

The forms included eight questions.

Did you have a chance to visit all the Trading Posts?

Most participants who turned in comment forms said they had a chance to visit all of the Trading Posts. Seventy-four percent answered Yes, 8 percent answered No, and 18 percent left this question blank.

Which of the areas or issues raised in the Trading Posts is most important to you? Why?

The most common response was to leave this question blank, 21 comment forms, or 24 percent left it blank.

When related areas or issues were grouped, several categories elicited the most responses to this question. Information and education, wildlife habitat related topics, and fish and wildlife management topics each represented 12 percent of the total comment forms submitted, and 36 percent overall when combined.

Ten percent of the comments noted that all of the areas or issues identified in the Trading Posts were equally important. Future funding, recreation issues, and citizen involvement represented 8, 8 and 6 percent respectively. The remaining 8 percent included other

topics, such as history, trading posts organization and design, and areas or issues not applicable to the question.

Specific responses within each category identified important Trading Posts issues, including:

- Educating and recruiting youths to participate in natural resource based recreational activities.
- Maintaining and restoring wildlife habitats; big game species management and predator-prey relationships.
- Ideas and concerns regarding future funding sources for Fish and Game.
- Providing additional access opportunities and access management issues.
- Keeping Idaho residents involved with decision making in Fish and Game.

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Which areas or issues do you think needs the most improvement or attention from Idaho Fish and Game? Why?

The most common response to this question was funding at 18 percent, followed closely by fish and wildlife management, information and education, and no written response at 16, 16 and 15 percent respectively.

Recreation related issues were identified on 13 percent of the forms, with 10 percent of responses identifying citizen involvement. Another 8 percent identified habitat related issues. The remaining responses included topics, such as enforcement and answers not applicable to the question.

Specific responses revealed several important issues:

- Including a broader funding base that would include nonconsumptive users.
- Broadening and improving the dissemination of Fish and Game information to the public.
- Increasing elk and mule deer populations throughout the state.
- More information and understanding of the impacts of predators to wildlife, particularly wolves' impacts on big game animals.
- Protecting all species of wildlife needs to improve.

Which area or issue do you think presents the largest challenge to Idaho Fish and Game in fulfilling its mission? Why?

The predominant topics listed among the responses as the largest challenge include funding, 45 percent; public involvement, 19 percent; and politics or political influence,

11 percent. Other notable responses included: comments about too much federal oversight or control; youth recruitment; increased relationships with private landowners; and balancing management of game and nongame species. There was no response on 15 forms.

What is the public's role in developing policies and programs for wildlife conservation and management? What are your ideas on how best to do that?

About 72 percent of the comment forms included an answer to this question. Some specific roles identified included:

- Informed voting on conservation issues.
- Participation and providing input at public meetings, such as the Summit.
- Participation in working and watershed groups.
- Lobbying and outreach.
- Volunteering in field and youth outdoor education activities.
- More collaboration with nongovernmental organizations.
- Financial support through new funding mechanisms.
- Providing feedback from observations while hunting and fishing to Fish and Game.
- Stewardship.
- Formation of watchdog groups.
- Education of less informed publics.
- Helping hire and steer Fish and Game employees.

Several participants want an opportunity to comment on wildlife management and conservation issues, but also cautioned that decisions should be based on sound biology and science. Someone referred to

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that as a delicate balance. Some are concerned that Fish and Game does not listen to or act on input, or does not answer hunters' and others' questions. Others said that Fish and Game does not care about the concerns of the nonhunting public.

Some want Fish and Game to provide more information to the public, including specific biological information. Some noted that the public has a responsibility to become more educated and informed on wildlife management and conservation issues. Many brought up the need to educate youth about the outdoors.

Several mentioned that nonhunters should pay their part. One specific comment was: If all have a say, all should pay.

Which areas or issues were you least familiar with?

Only 36 forms contained responses to this question. Most of the answers cited what Fish and Game does on a daily basis, especially as it relates to fish and wildlife management.

More specifically: The operations and ongoing duties associated with Fish and Game's hatcheries; the sociological aspects of dealing with a diverse group of interested citizens when managing wildlife; fish and wildlife regulations; and nongame management obligations.

Two other categories were mentioned: learning about how Fish and Game is funded and the funding challenges that are ahead, and learning about the history of wildlife conservation in Idaho.

Which areas or issues do you care least about?

Only 37 comment forms included responses to this question.

The most common response, submitted by 9 participants, was that all of the issues identified at the Trading Posts were important and that they cared about them. Trapping, nongame issues, history, artificial stocking, wildlife viewing areas, and specific wildlife management strategies were some of the other categories identified.

Is there anything that you think we missed or left out?

About half of the 89 responses included responses. A common theme was more emphasis on increased or creative funding for Fish and Game, in most cases for nonconsumptive activities. At the same time, one or two responses expressed concern about Fish and Game turning its back on a hunting public willing to fund 100 percent of management expenses.

A few participants said information on wolves and predators was lacking. Others said more information on preserving habitat and potential large scale habitat impacts from a multitude of factors would have been beneficial.

Other topics identified included:

- More info on the importance of trapping.
- More discussion on the relationship of Fish and Game to USDA's Wildlife Services.
- Development of a credible big game draw system.
- More information on handicapped programs.
- Additional youth education programs.
- How to keep politics out of science.
- More information on Fish and Game's internal budget.
- More information on the relationship of wildlife-livestock diseases.

One person said that the tough issues of funding, wolves, grizzly bears and ethical hunting were not emphasized enough.